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ABSTRACT

Intended for use by elementary teachers, this publication contains the music for ten songs from the Luba in the Kasai and Shaba regions of Zaire. The songs provide a means for young people to enjoy and to appreciate the musical heritage of Africa as a part of their more general understanding of music from around the world. The songs included are easy to learn and have been well-tested in classrooms and workshops. Text translations and music scores are provided. Teaching procedures are organized into steps to facilitate flexibility in teaching by rote. Phonetic pronunciation of works and rhythmic patterns are provided for some songs. Although each lesson plan suggests the use of an accompanying soundsheet, whether to use it or not is left to the teacher's discretion. The last several pages of the publication contain directions for making African rhythm instruments: a bottle cap instrument, rattles, rhythm sticks, and clappers. (Author/RM)

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AFRICAN CHILDREN'S SONGS FOR AMERICAN ELEMENTARY CHILDREN

by
Kazadi wa Mukuna

Music Department
and
African Studies Center
Michigan State University

Resources for Teaching and Research in African Studies

Number 2

SO 014 003

African Studies Center
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Music Department
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East Lansing, Michigan 48824

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PREFACE

The state of Michigan, under the leadership of Superintendent John W. Porter, has adopted guidelines for global education at the pre-collegiate level. Over a quarter of a million dollars has been allocated annually by the state for development of global education curriculum projects under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of the United States Office of Education.

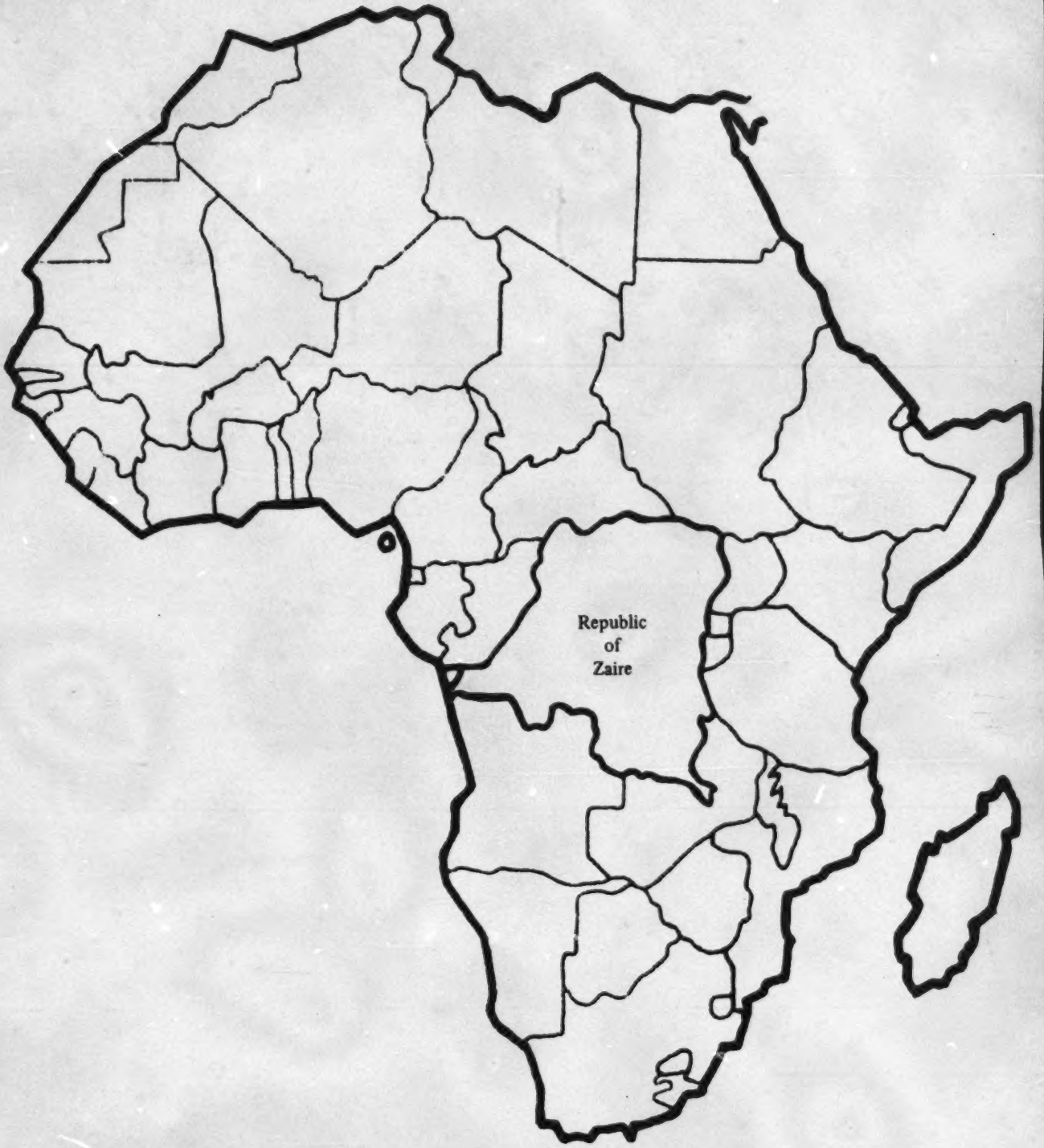
The Michigan guidelines define global education as:

> ...the lifelong growth in understanding, through study and participation, of the world community and the interdependency of its people and systems – social, cultural, racial, economic, linguistic, technological, and ecological. Global education requires an understanding of the values and priorities of the many cultures of the world as well as the acquistion of basic concepts and principles related to the world community. Global Education leads to implementation and application of the global perspective in striving for just and peaceful solutions to world problems.

African Children Songs for American Elementary Schools provides a means for young people to enjoy and to appreciate the musical heritage of Africa as a part of their more general understanding of music from around the world. These songs from the Luba region in Zaire (see map) are easy to learn and have been well-tested in classrooms and workshops around the state. The fun of singing is inherent in these selections; there are enjoyment and challenge in accomplishing the particular musical patterns and dance steps. Children who master these Zairian songs will appreciate the intricate melodies and rhythmic interpolation.

Michigan State University is indeed fortunate to have one of the leading African ethnomusicologists on the staff of the Music Department and the African Studies Center. Dr. Kazadi's interest in music for young children is a special gift. We welcome his enthusiasm and appreciate his work.

Marylee Wiley
Curriculum Specialist
African Studies Center



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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

One of the most difficult tasks after completing a work has always been, for me, that of remembering everyone who had helped along the way with one thing or another. To all, I give many thanks. At this moment, however, I would like to express my gratitude to a number of people who participated in the preparation of the present project. But, first, I am indebted to three elementary school teachers whose collaboration in drafting the text and involvement in testing the material in their classrooms have rendered positive results: Barbara Miller, Mary Ellen Giacobassi and her fifth graders at the Colt Elementary School (these children can also be heard on the accompanying soundsheet), and Vera Mozader.

I also owe my gratitutde to Anne Mason for designing the cover, to Jean Toomey for typing the manuscript, to David Sebald for the preparation of music scores for publication, and to John Mehne for recording the master tape.

INTRODUCTION

Recently American music educators have taken interest in studying and teaching the music literature of other cultures. Although for decades music publishing companies have been devoting sections of their texts to material from other countries, much of it has been modified for the so-called "American" taste. Authenticity has not apparently been of major concern. However, attitudes have changed. Today, schoolchildren are revealing stronger desire to learn authentic musical material from diverse cultures, material that has greater aesthetic and intellectual appeal for all concerned.

The present volume deals with teaching of African children's songs in American elementary schools. One may inquire "of what value is this literature and what needs is it fulfilling?" Prior to this question, one should ask with whom he is dealing. Who is the African child? How are his/her roles in society defined by tradition?

THE AFRICAN CHILD

The ten songs included in this volume are from the Luba in the Kasai and Shaba regions of Zaire. In their culture, the Luba define the child by chronological age and the specific age group of which he is a part. The latter is often determined by the knowledge the child has of tribal life and the rites of passage in which he has successfully taken part.

At birth the child is named after the direct ancestor who is honored by his family. Throughout his life the child carries with him the attributes of the ancestor, is considered to represent him, and is referred to as that particular ancestor, especially during family invocation ceremonies. This practice reflects the Luba's fear of death and their reliance on children for life after death. In other words, by naming the child after an ancestor, the latter is guaranteed life on earth. To triumph over death, the Muluba must leave *katelelo* (offspring), who will make it possible for his/her parents' names to continue to be heard among the living. Not to have a child is *wazimina* (to perish) without hope of reincarnation. This belief of reincarnation of the dead in newborn infants supports the custom of not naming children after their parents until all the ancestors' names have been used. Often the child is referred to as father, grandfather, uncle, mother, and so forth by his own parents out of respect for the person whose name he bears. In certain rituals a child is called upon to fake the role of the deceased whose name he carries. It is in this prestigious fresco, to paraphrase Th. Centner, where the kingdom of the dead and that of the living coexist, that an eternal alliance between the world of darkness and the world of light emerges. This link is symbolized by the child among the Luba.

The child's education in the context of Luba society--focused on the family, clan, ethnic group--is centered on preparation for traditional social life in which the child will participate as an adult. This education includes a variety of learning experiences directed toward one goal--creating prospective members of the society. As the child grows, he learns through direct and indirect teaching methods. In the educational system, songs and games are a principal means of insuring that these desirable values are passed from one generation to the next.

The dual identity of the Luba child is completed by the value he brings to his own physical life. His merits enhance his personal being. The child ceases to be a child at the time he has gone through initiation rites. For boys this occurs at approximately ages nine through eleven; and for girls, ages eleven through fourteen. The Luba child, then, is a clearly defined entity; his culture defines his spiritual and physical identities from birth and governs his behavior through life.

MUSICAL AND LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS

In approaching the teaching of aspects of African culture, one may face certain problems unique to music and language. However, the age and previous music experience of the child will largely determine the complexity of the problems. Generally, the younger and less experienced the child is, the more receptive he/she would be to foreign language, musical melodies, and rhythms.

Teaching procedures suggested here are appropriate for all ages but may need to be scaled up or down to coincide with the intellectual, musical, and motor skills of the particular individual or group involved. They are organized in steps to facilitate flexibility in teaching by rote. Each lesson plan suggests the use of the

soundsheet that accompanies the volume. Although this has been judged helpful, it is left to the individual teacher's discretion. Phonetic pronunciation of words and rhythmic patterns have been provided for songs with fewer musical problems. If needed, any teaching procedure herein can be applied.

The following linguistic rules, determinants of rhythmic organization in African vocal music, have been judged to be helpful in lesson preparation:

1. The rhythmic organization in the vocal music of Africa south of the Sahara is often dictated by the linguistic rhythmic structure.

2. All vowels preceded by a consonant and a semi-vowel (l, w, y...) are long.

   Examples: a) mu*dya*te
   b) mu*kwa*te
   c) bu*kwa*

3. All vowels followed by a nasal consonant (n, m) and by another consonant are long. The nasal consonant does not belong to the same syllable with the elongated vowel.

   Examples: a) Ka*lon*ji
   b) mba*lom*bi

4. All vowels pronounced on a composite tone are also long.

   Examples: a) ká*a*ná = kana
   b) ákáaka = akaka

5. Such explosives as "p," gutteral such as "g," are minimized, especially when preceded by semi-vowel or nasalized consonant.

   Examples: a) m*p*amba
   b) kamulangu

6. Examples for specific pronunciation:

   a) tshi = chee
   b) shi = shee
   c) kwa = kwah
   d) dia or dya = deeyah
   e) vua = vooah

LEYA WA LEYA

Teaching Procedure

Step 1: Play "Leya wa Leya" on the soundsheet.

Step 2: Write on the board as follows:

Step 3: Work on pronunciation and rhythmic pattern through rhythmic speech.

Step 4: Teach melodic line of chorus emphasizing the drawn note on *oh* (leh-oh)

Step 5: Teacher sings cantor part while class responds with chorus line.

Step 6: Write on the board as follows:

Teach rhythmic speech of above.

Step 7: Teach melody by segments of call and response excluding harmonic implications in response.

Step 8: Divide the class into two groups sing respectively call and response using the soundsheet.

Step 9: Alternate parts using the soundsheet.

Step 10: Perform song without the soundsheet.

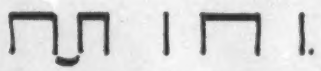
LEYA wa LEYA

Cantor
Le – ya wa le ya(o) leya leya, le - ya, leya (o) le – ya kwanyi wa kadiwe, le – ya
Chorus
C
leya, le – ya le ya(o) leya mu-dyate wa kasumo, le – ya le-ya le ya le ya(o) le – ya
Ch

LONGO WALE

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure

Cantor: Lon – go wah – leh



Chorus: Ah – yo lon – go lon – go leh

Cantor: Twah – kah – nahn – gee – neh

Chorus: . . .

Cantor: Mo – fo – ko wah – yee – lah

Chorus: . . .

Cantor: Neh – oo – kwah – ko

Chorus: . . .

Cantor: Lon – go wah lon – go

Chorus: . . .

3

LONGO WALE

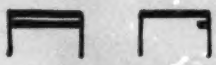
Cantor
Chorus
Lo—ngo wa – le A-yo lo – ngo longo – le Lo – ngo wa – le
C
Ch
A-yo lo ––ngo longo – le Twa–ka––na ngi–ne A-yo lo - ngo longo–
C
Ch
le Mo-foko wayi – la A-yo Longo longo – le Ne u – kwa –– ko
C
Ch
A-yo lo - ngo longo – le lo - ngo wa lo - ngo A-yo longo longo – le
4

KAMULANGU

Teaching Procedure

Step 1: Play the tape of "Kamulangu"

Step 2: Write rhythm and pronounciation of chorus on the board as follows:



Kah – moo – lan – goo

Clap and chant with the children.

Step 3: Teacher sings solo part and assists children to answer with "Kamulangu" melodically. Repeat section *A* until children are confident.

Step 4: On the blackboard write:

wah-ee-yo-yo-weh ee– yo – yo – weh

Say and clap this phrase together until children have assimilated it. Then teach the melodic line.

Step 5: Repeat the song from the beginning emphasizing the bridge of *Mukwate* (Moo-kwah-teh).

Step 6: Put the 2nd segment of section *B* on the blackboard as follows:

1. boo – kwa – bee – sahm – bah

2. vwaah – koc – nwaah – yee

3. noo – vwah koo mo – nah

4. moo – dee Kah – lon – jee

KAMULANGU
(continued)

5. wah – bahn – yahn peh-tah

6. Kah – moo – lan – goo

NOTE: teacher might, if desired, want to apply the Kodaly method to teaching of rhythmic patterns on clapping and chanting.

– Lead children in the chanting and clapping of the above until assimilated.

Step 7: Perform the entire section *B* syllabically (phonetically) and rhythmically.

Step 8: (a) Teach the top line of the second segment in section *B*.

(b) Put section *B* together (melody and rhythm).

NOTE: Harmony is optional.

Step 9: Perform the song in its entirety. Excluding the section *C*.

Step 10: Teach section *C* (tsho-mba) and add it to the entire melody.

KAMULANGU

The origin of this song has raised controversial arguments among popular musicians who have been claiming its authorship. Stemming from the precolonial era among the Luba in Kasai region, Kamu'angu belonged only to the repertoire of adult songs. The text reproduced here is a modification adapted to the tune during the struggle for independence around 1959-1962. This version and its accompanying dance became most popular wherever Luba are gathered socially. A children's adaptation of Kamulangu is very recent.

TEXT

Kamulangu we, kamulangu we!

Kamulangu, oh! kamulangu!

Kamulangu matumba dikumi

Kamulangu with ten large drums

Mukwata

Hold him

.... bukwa bisamba

Everybody

Vwa kunuayi nuvwax kumona mudi Kalonji

Come and see how Kalonji

Wabanya mpeta

Is distributing rank stripes

A. BASIC DANCE SEQUENCE

The sequence of steps described below will also be used in all of the variations. Directions are given with "eighth note" rhythmic value per beat. The sequence begins on the syllable "Ka" of the second "Kamulangu" and proceeds as follows:

- With right foot, step down hard in place on "Ka". (Note: This will be helpful in synchronizing dance steps with the song.)

- Wait one beat.

- Step sideways to right with right foot.

- Step left foot over right foot.

- Step right with right foot.

- Kick right with left foot.

- Step sideways to left with left foot.

- Step right foot over left foot.

- Step left with left foot.

- Kick left with right foot.

B. BASIC VERSION

- Step down hard in place with right foot.

- Wait 2 beats.

- Step down hard with left foot.

- Wait 2 beats.

- Step down hard with right foot. (This will fall on the same beat as the first "step down hard" in the basic sequence and thereby takes its place to form the four-measure cycle of steps to be repeated throughout the song.)

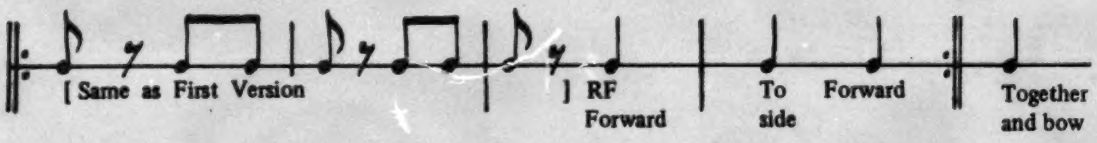
This can be rhythmically notated as follows:

FOUR STEP VERSION

Again perform the (A) basic dance sequence, but add the following steps:

- Extend right foot toward front and hold for 2 beats.
- Slide foot to right side and hold for 2 beats.
- Slide back to front and hold for 2 beats. (This substitutes for the first "step down hard" in the basic sequence as this pattern is repeated.)

The rhythm for this is notated as follows:

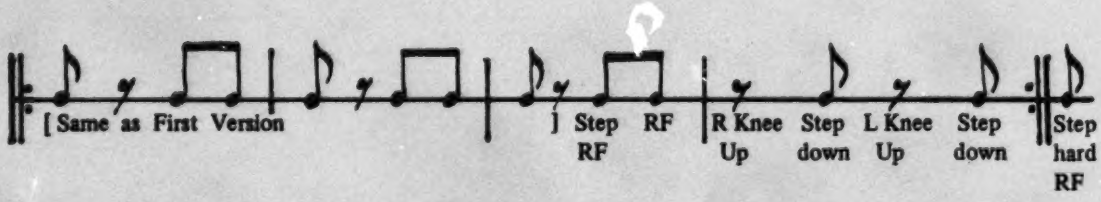


THIRD VERSION

Perform the (A) basic dance sequence and add the following steps:

- Step in place twice with right foot.
- Lift right knee.
- Step back down.
- Lift left knee.
- Step back down.
- Step down hard with right foot. (This substitutes for the "step down hard" in the basic sequence as the pattern is repeated.)

This can be notated as follows:



The dance is performed with everyone in a circle or a straight line depending on the available space. When the three versions of the dance are learned, it is interesting and challenging to vary the versions used in the course of the song. This can be accomplished by the leading person calling out which version is to be used at the beginning of each four-measure sequence. It is important to remember that the rhythmic coordination between the song and dance be felt and that the dances be performed in a free and relaxed manner.

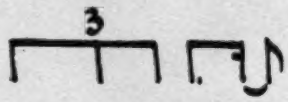
9

KAMULANGU

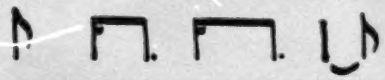
Canto
Ka – mu- langu we
kamu - langu we
ka – mu- langu ma
Chorus
Ka - mu – la ––– ngu
C
tumba di – ku – mi
ka – mu - langu we
mu - kwa – te
Ch
kamu –– la – ngu
la – ngu
C
Wa –– i – yo ––––– yo we,
i – yo – yo we
bu –– kwa bi - sa - mba
Ch
C
vuaku – nua – yi nu - vua
ku - mo - na mu - di Kalonji
wa- ba nya mpe ta ka – mu
Ch
C
tsho ––––– mba
Ch
la – ngu
ka – mu ––––––– la –– ngu
10

KUNGULU POLO

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure

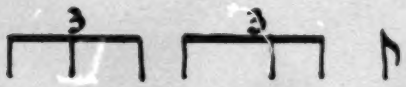


Cantor: Koon – goo – loo po – lo



Chorus: Kyah – boo – lwah mah – beh – leh

kya – boo – lwah



Cantor: Kwee – kah – lah kwah – boo – kah – tah

KUNGULU POLO

Kungulu polo

The enormous elephant

Kyabulwa mabele, kyabulwa

She lacks the breasts, she lacks them

Kwikala kwa bukata

But she is big

Kungulu polo

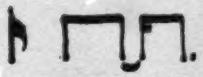
The enormous elephant

KUNGULU POLO

KAWE LETA

Teaching Procedure

Step. 1: Put rhythm and pronunciation of chorus on the board as follows:



Kah-wah leh-tah

Step 2: Clap and chant with children.

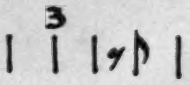
NOTE: The children may understand the notation more easily as illustrated above (in eight)

Step 3: Sing the cantor part and have the children respond with chanting and clapping of the chorus.

Step 4: Add the melody to the chorus part.

Step 5: Sing the cantor part and have the children respond with *singing* the chorus part emphasizing the drawn note on syllable *leh.*

Step 6: Put rhythm and Kodaly speech rhythm on the board as follows:



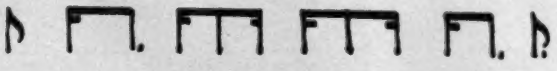
Tri-ple-ta ti ta

Clap and chant with children.

Step 7: Have children clap and sing chorus.

Step 8: Teach cantor part one section at a time.

(a) Kah-nah leh-lo Kah-nah leh-lo



(b) Kah-nah Kah-shee-la Kah-pee-lah Kah-pee-lan-geh

KAWE LETA
(continued)

(c) ah-Kah-Kah Kah-yah

Keh-lah mah-Ko-pah dee-lan-g-h

(d) leh – tah – oh—leh-tah

Step 9. Divide class into three groups. Alternating cantor, chorus and clapping parts.

Step 10. The correct performance of this song involves two groups; one singing cantor and the other chorus. Both participate in the clapping. One may find it easier to perform in three groups as suggested in Step 9.

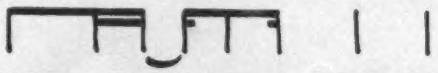
KAWE LETA

C
Ka - na le — lo, ka — na le — lo ka - na ka -
Ch
Ka — we le — ta
HC
C
shi - le ka — pi — la ka — pi — le — nge a ka — ka ka - ya
Ch
3
Ka — we le 3 — ta
HC
C
3
ke — la ma - ko - pa di - le — nge le — ta (oo) le — ta
Ch
3
Ka — we le 3 — ta Ka -
HC

MUDYATE MUDYATƎ

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure

Cantor: Moo – dyah – teh, moo – dyah – teh



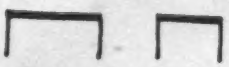
Chorus: Kah – moo – dyah – teh moo – dyah – teh

Kah – moo – dyah – teh

Cantor: Yo – wah – neh nahn – dee

Chorus: Wah kahn – yah – tah moo – kee – foon – dah

wah kahn – yah - tah



Cantor: Mah – mah nahn – dee

Chorus: Wah kahn – yah – tah moo – kee – foon – dah

wah kahn – yah – tah

MUDYATE MUDYATE

Mudyate, mudyate

Step on him, step on him

Kamudyate, mudyate, kamudyate

Go to step on him, step on him, go to step on him

Yowane nandi

And John also

Wakanyata mu kifunda, wakanyata

So that he may not step in the circle, so that he may not step

Sophia nandi

And Sophy also

Wakanyata mu kifunda, wakanyata

So that she may not step in the circle, so that she may not step

Mama nandi

And mother also

Wakanyata mu kifunda, wakanyata

So that she may not step in the circle, so that she may not step

Mudyate, mudyate

Step on him, step on him

MUDYATE MUDYATE

S
Ch
Mu – dya – te, mudya — te
Mu
ka - mu dya - te mu – dya —— te Ka – mu - dya te
Yo — wa – ne nandi
So — fi — a nandi
ka – mudya —— te
wa kanya – ta muki – fu — nda wa kanya — ta
Ma – ma nan – di
wa kanya — ta mu-mi Fu —— nda wa kanya —— ta

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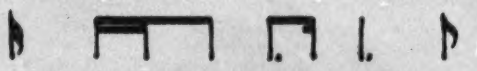
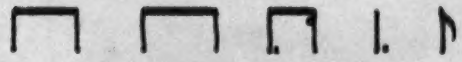
MULANGA NAKOMESHA DYA LELO

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure



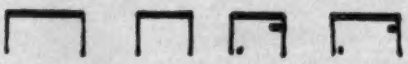
Cantor: **Moo – lahn – gah – yeh nah – ko – meh – sheh**

dyah leh – lo

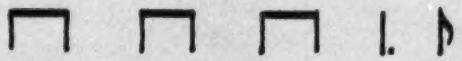


Chorus: **Moo – lahn – gah – yeh nah – ko – meh – sheh**

dyah leh – lo



Cantor: **Kee – peh – lah wah peh – lah kwah – bo**

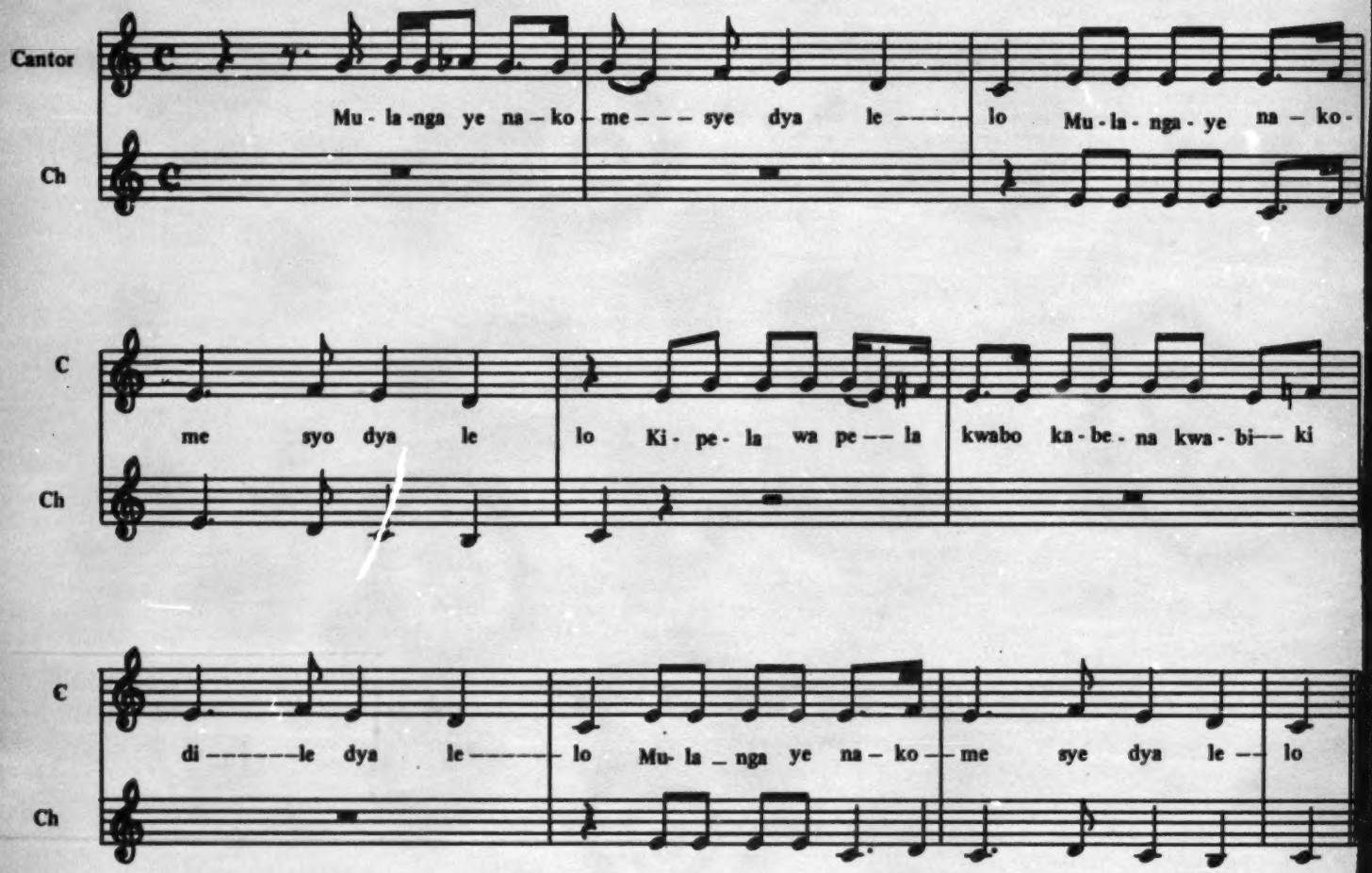


kah – beh – nah kwah – bee – kee – dee – leh

dyah leh – lo

Chorus: . . .

MULANGA NAKOMESHA DYA LELO

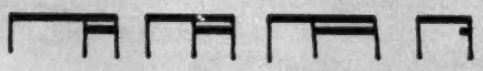

Cantor
Ch
Mu - la -nga ye na – ko – me – – – sye dya le – – – – – lo Mu - la - nga - ye na – ko -
C
Ch
me syo dya le lo Ki - pe - la wa pe – – la kwabo ka - be - na kwa - bi – – ki
C
Ch
di – – – – – – le dya le – – – – – lo Mu- la _ nga ye na – ko – – me sye dya le – – lo

PAMBA WA BITOLE

Teaching Procedure

Step 1: Play "Pamba wa Bitole" on the soundsheet.

Step 2: Write on the board the two chorus responses in the following manner:



(a) Wah bee-to-leh bee-to-leh Koo bee-lahm-bah

(b) mbah-lom-bee beh-nah moo-sheen-deh keh Bahm-pah-dee

Teach rhythmic speech until secured.

Step 3: Teach melodic lines of chorus responses.

Step 4: Teacher sings cantor as class responds with chorus.

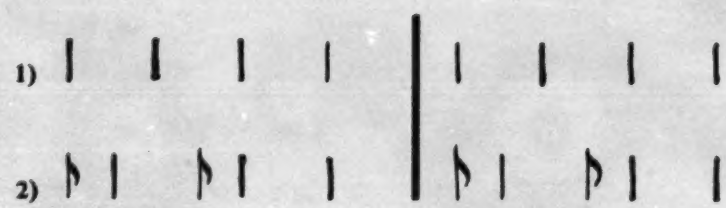
Step 5: When repeating at the end of section (a) the cantor should enter on syllable *deh* of Moosheendeh (Mushinde) with *mpamba* omitting *wa*.

EXAMPLE: mbalombi bena mushin-mpamba wa bitole

NOTE: In section *b* the chorus part does not change and so the teacher may proceed with the entire song noting the change in cantor part.

Step 6: Sing the song in its entirety with soundsheet. Teacher sings cantor while class sings response.

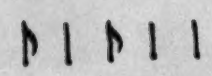
Step 7: (a) Write on the board



(b) Start with line (1) to establish the pulse.

(c) Teach line (2) through use of Kodaly rhythm speech.

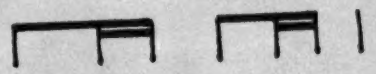
PAMBA WA BITOLE
(continued)



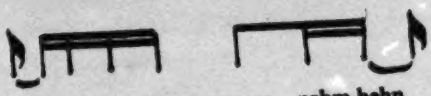
EXAMPLE: ti ta ti ta ta

(d) Divide class into two groups. Clapping and chanting rhythms 1 and 2 together.

Step 8: (a) Write the cantor part on the board phonetically and rhythmically:

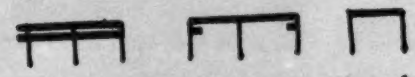


1. Wahm – pahm-bah wah bee-to-leh



2. nay koo-moo-too waym pahm-bahn

vwah-lah chee – neech



3. mbah-lom-bee beh-nah moo-sheen-deh

4. mbah – lom – bee beh-nah moo-sheen-deh

(b) Teach the above together

(c) Add melody

Step 9: Sing song with the soundsheet, dividing the class in two groups, cantor, chorus and rhythmic accompaniment.

Step 10: Perform the song as a whole with rhythmic accompaniment without the soundsheet.

MPAMBA WA BITOLE

This song belongs to the repertoire of songs sung during ceremonies related to twin children. Although it is primarily an adult song, it is often sung by children while playing in their make-believe village "mansansa," where they imitate adult situations. During the actual ceremony, the twin's mother covers her body with blue and calmwood powder mixed with palm oil. All participants at the ceremony mark their foreheads with a mixture of clay chalk with water.

TEXT

Mpamba wa bitole

The spotty twin's mother

Wa bitole, bitole ku bilamba

With spots all over her clothes

Ne ku mutu we mpamba nvwuala tshinyi?

What can I wear on my head?

Mbalombi bena mushinda ke bampadi

I've asked those with calmwood powder,
and they denied me it

PAMBA WA BITOLE

Cantor
Wa mpamba wa bito – le
ne
Chorus
wa bitole bito – – le ku–bi–la–mba
Hand Clap
C
ku mu-tu we mpamba nvusla tshi ni e
Ch
mba–lo – mbi be – na mushi – nde ke
HC
C
mbalombi be – na mushi – nde
Ch
bampa - di
mba – lo – mbi be – na mushi – nde
HC
C
mbalo – mbi be – na mu – shi – nde
Ch
mba - lo – mbi be – na mushi – ndeke ba – mpa-da e
HC

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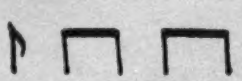
MUNTWA BENE WA MANGADIBWE

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure

Cantor: Moon – twa beh – neh wah Mahn – gah – dee – bwe.



Chorus: Ah – ee – yo leh – leh.

Cantor: Leh wee – pee – kah – nyee oo-ken – dah mah – loo

Chorus: . . .

Cantor: Oo – tshee – nah ntah – poo yah – kah – to – kah – nahn – ga.

Chorus: . . .

MUNTWABENE WA MANGADIBWE

Muntwabene wa Mangadibwe

The favorite wife of Mangadibwe

Le wipikanyi ukenda malu?

Are you cooking or are you washing your feet?

Utshina ntapo yakatokananga

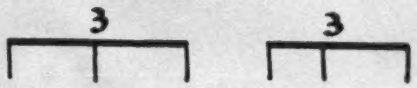
Are you afraid of dirtying your tattoo

MUNTWA BENE WA MANGADIBWE

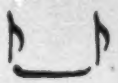
S
Ch
Mu - ntwa be - ne wa Ma - nga di - bwe
Mu - ntwa be - ne wa Ma - nga
A - yo - o le - le
di - bwe
Le wi - pi ka - nyi u - ke - nda ma - lu
U
A - yo - o le - le
A - yo - o le - le
tshi - na ntapu ya - ka to - ka - na - nga
A - yo - o le - le

KAMIMBI KAMIMBI

Phonetic Pronunciation and Rhythmic Structure



Cantor: **Kah – meem – bee, kah – meem – bee**



Chorus: **Eh.....**

Cantor: **Ee – nah Lo – dee**

Chorus: **Kah – vweh – leh mee – lon – geh – lo**

KAMIMBI KAMIMBI

Kamimbi, kamimbi

Swallow, swallow

Ina Lodi

Lodi's mother (come and see)

Kavwele milongelo

She (swallow) is dressed in multicolor dress

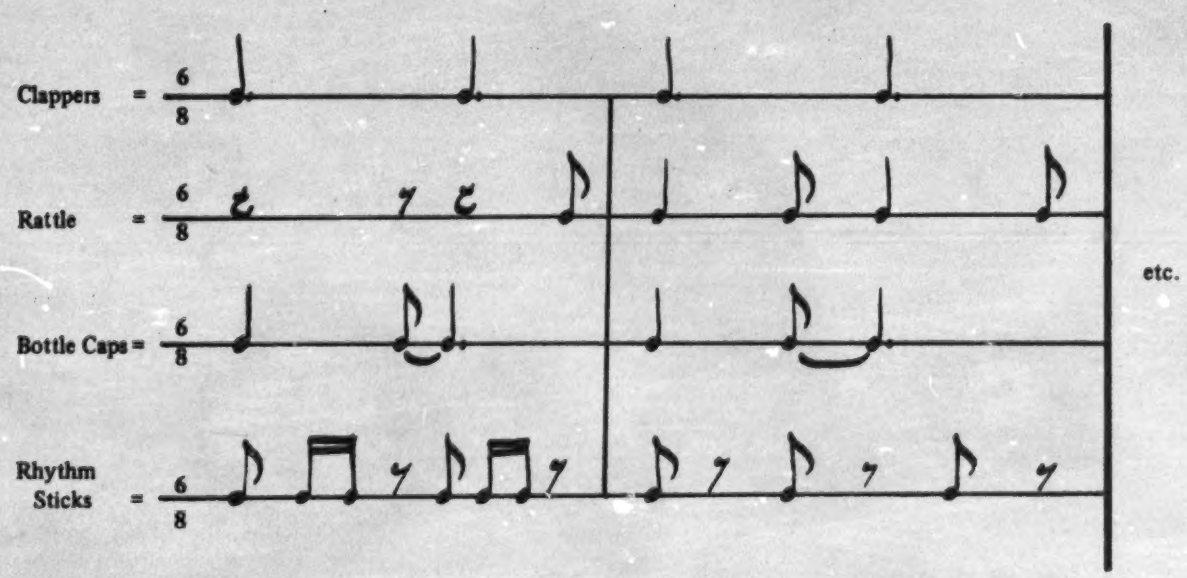
Cantor
Ka– mi – mbi, Ka - mi - mbi Ee Ka - mi - mbi, Ka - mi - mbi Ee
Chorus
Ee Ee
Hand Clap
C
I - na Lo – di vwe – le mi – lo – nge – lo I - na Lo – di vwe – le mi
Ch
Ka-vwe – le mi – lo – nge – lo Ka – vwe - le mi
HC
C
lo – nge – lo I – na Lo – di vwe – le mi – lo – nge – lo
Ch
lo – nge – lo Ka – vwe – le mi – lo – nge – lo
HC

MAKING AFRICAN RHYTHM INSTRUMENTS

The African child relies on his imagination and creativity to imitate and/or produce his musical instruments. The materials needed to fashion the instruments are gathered from the environment. A creative activity such as making rhythm instruments in the classroom can assist the American child in developing an awareness of environmental natural resources as well as that of his abilities.

Rhythm instruments that will be described are all native to Africa. They were chosen for their ease of construction and usefulness in the classroom. They should prove to be valuable tools in stimulating the imagination and creativity of students by virtue of the participation involved in gathering the necessary materials, constructing the instruments, and playing them.

The following is one suggested rhythm ensemble which makes use of the instruments described.



The making of instruments in the classroom is also conducive to a coordination of instructional units between teachers of varied subjects. All the instruments suggested could be made in cooperation, for example, with the art teacher. In the case of the rattle, the assistance of the mathematics or geometry teacher could be enlisted. In any case, making African rhythm instruments in the classroom is an excellent way to motivate students and encourage physical participation. Through planning, organizing, and completing such a project, the students can be proud of their instruments while having learned to use their environment creatively in gathering the materials needed to fashion their instruments. These instruments will also prove to be valuable in further rhythmic studies and activities throughout the school year.

BOTTLE CAP INSTRUMENT

MATERIALS NEEDED: 4–8 bottle caps (NOT the twist-off type)
approximately 8 inches of heavy string or flat shoe string

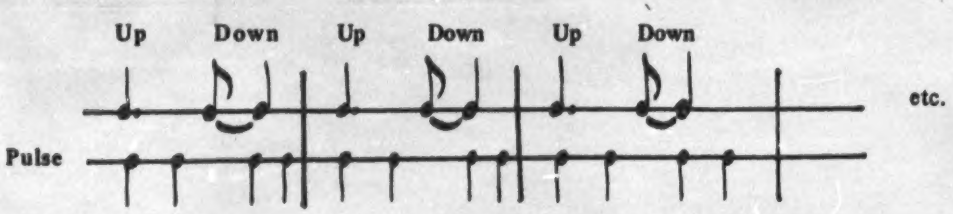
TOOLS NEEDED: hammer
awl or large nail
scissors
small block of wood

The bottle cap instrument, made from just string and bottle caps, is one of the most popular rhythm instruments used by African children in Zaire. The first step in making it is to punch a hole in the center of each bottle cap by placing the cap right side up on a small block of wood and using an awl or a large nail and a hammer. Tie a square knot in one end of the peice of string and thread the first bottle cap onto the string so that the top of the cap is toward the knot. Thread the next cap on so that it faces in the opposite direction. Continue threading the bottle caps onto the string, alternating the direction of the tops of the caps. The number of caps may vary due to individual differences in hand size (fewer caps for smaller hands) or preferences.

Place half of the bottle caps in the palm of the hand, with the string between the index and middle fingers. Wrap the string and other half of the bottle caps around the bottom of the hand and adjust the length of the string so that the caps on the knotted end of the string meet the caps in the palm of the hand. Knot the loose end of the string in that place and cut off the excess.

The sound of this instrument is produced when the bottle caps on opposite ends of the string strike each other in the palm of the hand. To play the instrument, hold the string and half of the bottle caps between the index and middle fingers of the right hand. Hold the arm in a position parallel to the floor, with the hand turned slightly to the right (see Figure 1). First, the string is swung upward over the thumb so the caps meet. The hand is then closed to catch the caps (see Figure 2). Next, the caps in the plam from under the hand. Again the hand is closed to catch the caps (see Figure 3). As speed and dexterity develop, it will no longer be necessary to close the hand to catch the caps on the upswing.

This instrument is particularly useful with the song "Leya wa Leya." The following rhythm and order of up-and-down swings is suggested.



This rhythm can be started as an introduction to the song and slowly be faded out after the song has finished for an effective ending.

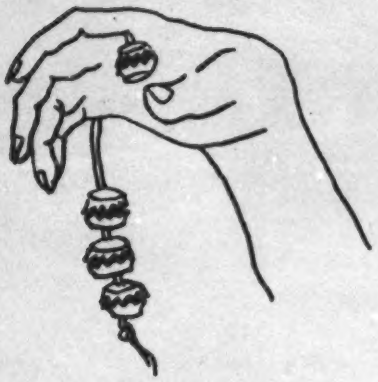


Figure 1

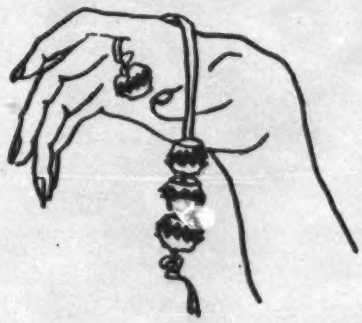


Figure 2

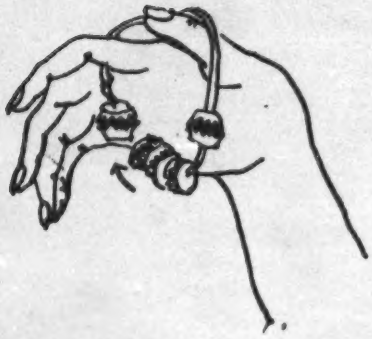


Figure 3

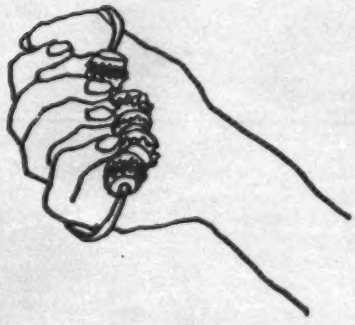


Figure 4

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RATTLES

MATERIALS NEEDED: 1 dried stick at least 6 in. long and ½ in. to 3/4 in. thick
2 tin cans of the same size (preferably soup cans)
1 small nail
3 thumb tacks
electrical tape
dried beans, peas, corn, or rice (approximately 1 tablespoonful)
1 8 in. by 12 in. sheet of paper

TOOLS NEEDED: hammer
can opener
tin snips
compass
protractor
felt tip marker
knife
c–clamps

The instructions are numbered because of their length.

1. Set can upright on a corner of the paper, and trace the circumference. (See Figure 4.)

2. Find the radius of the traced circle.

3. Measure and record the length of the side of the can.

4. To calculate the arc of the cone pattern, use the formula:

$$\frac{\text{radius}}{\text{length of side}} \times 360^{\circ}$$

5. With the compass set equal to the length of the can's side, swing an arc on the paper equal to the number of degrees made in the preceding calculation. Use the protractor to measure the degrees.

6. Cut the bottoms out of the cans with a can opener.

7. Cut the cans along the seams with tin snips. (Caution should be exercised in working with the sharp edges of the can.)

8. Carefully unbend the cans and hammer them as flat as possible.

9. With the felt tip marker, trace the cone pattern onto each piece of tin. Be sure to leave the can seams out of the pattern when tracing. (See Figure 5.)

10. Cut the pattern out with tin snips.

11. Firmly affix each piece of tin to the work surface with c–clamps.

12. Puncture evenly spaced holes into the tin with a hammer and nail. (See Figure 5.)

13. Carve the stick as shown in Figure 6 to form a handle for the rattle.

14. Shape the tin around the carved end of the handle. (Cut the tip of the cone back if necessary.)

15. Screw the three screws evenly around the base of the cone and into the handle.

16. Apply tape around the base of the cone and on all exposed sharp edges.

17. Shape the other piece of tin into a cone.

18. Tape all sharp edges of the second cone.

19. Place about 1 tablespoon of dried beans, peas, corn, or rice in the cone. (Experimentation may be necessary to determine the type and amount of contents that produces the most desirable sound.)

20. Tape the wide ends of the cones together securely.

21. The handle may also be covered with tape or sanded smooth and painted.

Rattles can also be made from a variety of other materials. Beads or seeds can be loosely tied around the outside of dry, hollow gourds or dried beans, seeds, rice, or popcorn can be placed inside. Two paper cups can be taped together with a small amount of any of the contents listed above inside to form rattles for younger children. Rattles made with a variety of different contents will add different qualities of sound to rhythmic ensembles.

RHYTHM STICKS

MATERIALS NEEDED: pieces of dried tree limb
sandpaper
paint

TOOLS NEEDED: saw
sharp knife (such as a paring knife)

Rhythm sticks are perhaps the simplest and most commonly used rhythm instruments for accompaniment of African music. The first step necessary in making them is to saw a relatively straight dried tree limb into two 12–inch pieces and saw off any small twigs. It may be noted here that the sound produced will vary with different thicknesses and types of wood. The best tone will be produced with a stick approximately 1 inch in diameter and from some type of hardwood. The bark is stripped from the stick with a sharp knife. Knots from small twigs can also be smoothed with the sharp knife. Then the stick is sanded down to remove all sharp edges and rough spots. The stick can then be painted with enamel. This can be done with a brush or spray paint, but it should be noted that several coats will be required because the wood is dry. The students then can add designs to individualize their instruments. This instrument can be made at any grade level but requires adult supervision in the use of saws and knives.

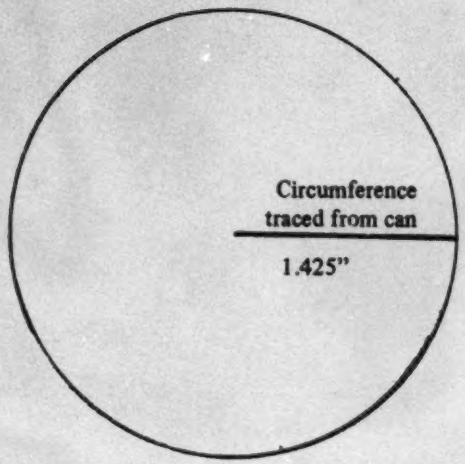

Figure 4

Figure 6

Stick used for handle

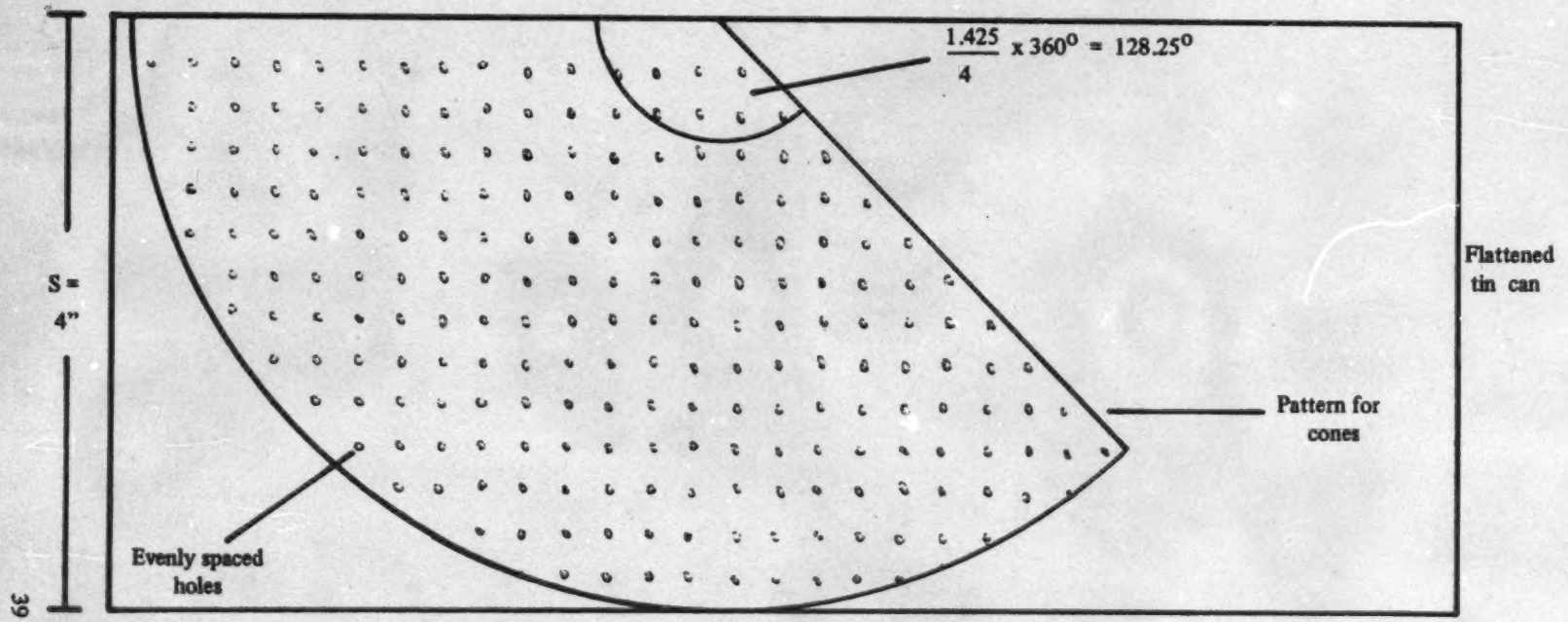

Figure 5

CLAPPERS

MATERIALS NEEDED: Two blocks of wood, approximately 3 in. x 5 in. and ½ in. thick
two pieces of strap (piece from an old belt or other strong material), each approximately 8 in. long
sandpaper
8 nails

TOOLS NEEDED: hammer

Smooth the edges of the blocks with sandpaper. Fold one end of the strap under to provide a double thickness for extra strength, and nail the strap to the center of the 5–inch side of the block. (Use of two nails on each side will prevent the strap from moving.) With the block in the palm of the hand, measure the strap so it fits snugly across the knuckles of the hand. Double the other end of the strap under, cut off any excess, and nail the strap as on the other side. Follow the same procedure in making the other clapper.

The instrument is played by clapping the two blocks together as when clapping one's hands. As with rhythm sticks, the sound produced will vary with the type of wood used. The most resonance is produced by a hardwood, but plywood may also be used. Experimentation with clapping different sides of the blocks together before attaching the straps is also helpful in finding the best possible sound.

The use of clappers is very effective in setting the tempo for a song by clapping an even beat. They can also be used in a variety of other rhythm patterns and rhythmic activities.

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